

October 9, 2009

Aloha Commissioners,

My name is Barbara Kahn-Langer. My purpose for coming here today, is to discuss the Community Development Process, particularly, the Puna Community Development Plan Process.

When the Puna Community Development Plan was first announced in the Hawaiian Tribune Herald in 2005, my husband and I immediately signed up to participate in the process. We opened our home to neighbors and encouraged their participation even though we were told by long-time residents that it was a waste of our time. The plan would sit on the shelves that other plans sit on. Nothing would happen.

I didn't believe that and I thought I could be of value to the process.

I became Mayor of my small city in California, in the mid-'80s, after successful community litigation forced the city to develop its first General Plan as required by the state. The resulting community involvement process beckoned new community leaders, educated the community as a whole, and brought the city into the then 20th century in terms of community involvement in land use planning. Prior to that successful litigation and subsequent moratorium on all development, a small group of real estate and development interests controlled all land use and zoning decisions.

From that experience, I expected that, at most, the Puna Community Development Plan process would take two years participation. The remaining eight years before development of the next General Plan, would be used by the county to implement what the people supported in their CDPs. Land use maps would be adjusted where needed. Revision of the County Zoning Codes would be adjusted. The result would be a partnership between all stakeholders so that land use would proceed according to the values of each identified planning community.

Community Development Plans are not meant to be static creations. They are living governmental organisms. They involve action, community

participation and by their specific nature, subsequent timely implementation by the County.

From my participation in this process from the beginning, I'm very concerned about the county government's ability to move forward on what the people supported in their plan. I see the need to incorporate time requirements within the County Charter so that implementation of the CDP's occurs before the next revision of the General Plan. It is one matter to legislatively say "we should". It is an entirely different matter to know "we must".

By including the Community Development Plans and their Action Committees in the County Charter, we will be protecting the integrity of the community's participation in this planning process. Further, it will guide future planning efforts required by law to take place in a timely manner.

Respectfully,

Barbara Kahn-Langer

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Kahn-Langer". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.